further emphasized keeping in mind the need to improve facilities at such places from the point of view of tourism, culture and civic cleanliness.

World Heritage status to historical paintings of Bhimbaithaka caves in M.P.

†1003. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that UNESCO, is considering to grant of World Heritage status to historical paintings in Bhimbaithaka caves near Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the World Organisation has agreed to give financial assistance for the purpose and if so, the extent of assistance proposed to be provided; and

(d) whether Government are also considering to give financial assistance and if so, the extent of assistance proposed to be provided?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) and (b) The World Heritage Committee its 27th session, held at Paris between 30th June and 5th July 2003, has approved the inscription of the Rock Shelters of Bhimbetha near Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, on the World Heritage list as proposed by India for 2003.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) A sum of Rs. 112 lakhs has been earmarked for conservation, excavation and area development.

Development of tourism in upper Assam

1004. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has taken any comprehensive view to develop tourism in upper Assam as it contains the Kajiranga

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Abhayaranya, the historical monuments of Cheraideo, Gargaon, Sivasagar, and also Satriya cultural heritage site of Majuli etc; and

(b) if so, what are the plans to develop the region for tourism including development of Cheraideo after excavation of Maidaam No. 2 by A.S.I. and through announcing Cheraideo as world heritage site?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) Department of Tourism, Government of India has undertaken development of tourism in Assam under its schemes for Integrated Development of Tourist Circuit and Product, Infrastructure & Destination Development. Following projects were sanctioned for Assam during 2002-2003:

1. Construction of facilities for pilgrims at Kamakhya
2. N.E. Circuit :-
   (i) River Front Development along Brahamputra
   (ii) Development of Ethnic Village at Bhalakpung
   (iii) Camping site at Khora
   (iv) Signages
3. Development of Majuli Island Eco-Resort
4. Rural Tourism at Phumen Ingti

Besides, Archaeological Survey of India has provided some tourist amenities like drinking water facilities, toilets, approach pathways, parking places, sitting benches, tree rounds etc. in most of the centrally protected monuments in upper Assam. Some of the monuments like Karenghar (Talatalghar), Ranghar in Joysagar locality, Ahom Raja's Palace at Gargaon, Group of Maidaam at Cheraideo are provided with better tourist facilities.

(b) After the excavation of Maidaam No. 2 at Cheraideo, District Sivsagar, the Archeological Survey of India has completed the works of conservation and area development, which include, enclosure wall of the Maidaam No. 2, boundary wall in front of the site and fencing on the other sides of the area, the pathways from the entrance to the monuments and tourist facilities such as drinking water, toilet block and parking for vehicles. There is currently no proposal to seek World Heritage status for Cheraideo.